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THE QUAVER,

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And Exponent of the Letter-note Method.

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The Quaver,

November 1st, 1878.

OUR friends, the Tonic Sol-faists, have recently achieved a victory in one quarter and experienced a repulse in another. Dr. Stainer, organist of St. Paul's Cathedral, London, when officiating as chairman at the opening soiree of a series of Tonic Sol-fa Classes, is reported by the *Pall Mall Gazette* to have been spoken as follows:—

"The Tonic Sol-fa method had an area of work before it which had never been undertaken by musicians of the ordinary school. The system was able to reach and teach people whom it would be impossible to reach, and almost absurd to attempt to teach, through the difficulties of the staff notation. He hoped that the age of peace between the old and new notations was approaching. He deprecated attacks from either side. There was no real antagonism between the two, and he wanted to see them grow up side by side."

This, coming from such a source, is unquestionably a very high compliment to the Tonic Sol-fa method and its promoters.

The expression of an opinion unfavourable to the Tonic Sol-fa notation arose in this way: at the Birkenhead Eisteddfod, in September last, several of the choirs were thrown out of the competition because they could only sing from the Tonic Sol-fa notation, on which occasion the adjudicator (Professor Macfarren) is reported to have said:—

"A vast work, he admitted, had been done by the votaries of the Tonic Sol-fa notation, but they would have done a million times more good if they had taught the people to read real music, instead of spending their ingenuity in a new system."

Mr. Curwen appears to have taken exception to the opinions expressed, or else to the printed report thereof, and communicated with Professor Macfarren on the subject. From the correspondence which ensued, the words "real music" do not appear to have been employed, but in other respects the report is correct, and Professor Macfarren adds the following remarks in one of his letters:—

"Wholly apart from any question of the superiority of your notation over that which has been in use for three centuries, I feel it to be unfortunate that men who are working admirably in the tuition of music, invalidate

their efforts by employing an exceptional cypher instead of the acknowledged alphabet of the art, which is understood and read all over the civilized world. And it is to be regretted that meritorious singers should by this means be debarred from the exercise of their talent, and the enjoyment of compositions not specially prepared for their use."

While probably nine-tenths of the musical public will agree with Dr. Stainer in praising the soundness of the Tonic Sol-fa Method, the excellence of its organization, the zeal of its promoters, and the advantages of the work already accomplished, it is equally probable that the same nine-tenths of the musical public will endorse Professor Macfarren's opinion respecting the Tonic Sol-fa notation. For, granting that the staff-notation can be made as easy as the Tonic Sol-fa (and this fact has been demonstrated by Letter-note and others), the question naturally arises, why should the public have to study two notations, one for the voice, and the other for the pianoforte; why should publishers have to go to the expense of printing two separate books,* one in the new notation, the other in the old; why should musical literature be saddled with the inconvenience of a broad gauge and a narrow gauge; if one notation will serve the purpose equally well?

It is not any part of our mission to attack other methods, nor are we taking a view hostile to the Tonic Sol-fa method—quite the contrary—and the matter crops up for review with the rest of the month's news. We have less compunction in siding with Professor Macfarren's view of the notations because what is really good in Tonic Sol-fa is in a measure the contrivance of Mr. Curwen and his coadjutors, and the weak point in it—the notation—is Miss Glover's, having been adopted with certain modifications, and used by Mr. Curwen as a means towards an end—viz., that of teaching singing in an easier way than that afforded by the staff pure and simple. But there are many ways of accomplishing this, and while agreeing with Dr. Stainer so far as his remarks apply to the Tonic sol-fa method, we hold that Professor Macfarren is perfectly justified in his strictures upon the Tonic Sol-fa notation.

* MUSICAL NOTATION. A correspondent remarks:—

"Although two heads are better than one, two musical notations are not. If I issue a tune-book of say 100 pages, of which I expect to sell 10,000 in the new notation and a similar quantity in the old, I might sell the book at 1s.; but if I could print the whole 20,000 in the same notation, making a single edition of the whole, I need only charge the public 6d. to 8d. per copy."

CHAPTER XIII.

Modulation.

CHAPTER VII. deals as fully with this subject as the extent of our studies at that stage permitted: it now only remains to enumerate the other chords by means of which modulation can be effected, and to add a word or two of practical advice to the student. In paragraph 192 it was stated that modulation is accomplished by introducing the dominant seventh of a new key, and effecting a cadence in that key. We also found that in many cases the dominant *triad* of a new key, although not so unequivocal, served the purpose equally well. In a similar way, other chords which contain a note distinctive of a new key can effect modulation to that key, and any equivocalness which (from a theoretical point of view) might appear can be avoided by introducing sooner or later the dominant seventh of the desired key, preferably in the form of a full cadence. Moreover, so greatly is the ear influenced by *habit*, any sound which does not belong to the key will, if interpolated in a manner sufficiently prominent, or in a kind of progression which the ear associates with the advent of a modulation, practically effect the change. Dr. Macfarren tersely states the case thus: "Change of key may be effected by any concord or discord containing notes foreign to the key that is to be quitted, either in the original position or in any of its available inversions."

388. Any chord which *includes* the dominant seventh (as, for example, the dominant ninth, eleventh, or thirteenth) is, of course, equivalent to the dominant seventh itself. Any of the chords described in Chap. XII. can be employed, of which the most usual are the *augmented sixth* and the *diminished seventh*: the latter chord can be made to assume so many different phases of notation that it is much used for the purpose of enharmonic modulation.

389. In working out a modulation, the student is recommended to refer everything to the key in which the music is for the moment, reading the notes according to their position in the new key. In order to compare the value and power of the various ways of introducing a modulation, let the student write for himself examples varied in every possible way, after the manner of Nos. 146 and 148, or with continuations like No. 150: in this way a just estimate can be formed, but, if the passages differ in rhythm and interval, "other contingencies" are certain to influence the effect of the modulation. It is, however, a very useful exercise, for the purpose of general study, to search out as many illustrations as possible of some particular modulation.

HARMONIZING.

390. The directions given in paragraphs 155 to 158 have to be extended to other keys. If a melody does not contain an accidental, the harmonizer still has the option of employing a borrowed chord (*par.* 351), or effecting a modulation. The student should ascertain what sounds in a key can be conveniently treated as belonging to some other given key, and, in deciding the question as to whether a modulation shall be effected, he has to consider the progressions of the melody—Do they point to a given modulation? do

they admit of a cadence in a given key? etc. : he must, however, remember that there is a possibility of borrowing or modulating *too much*.

391. If a melody contains an accidental, the foreign sound can be treated in either of three ways—(1), as a note of ornamentation merely, being a passing tone (*par.* 337) or an auxiliary tone (*par.* 338); (2), as a sound belonging to a borrowed chord; and (3), as involving a regular modulation. In deciding upon either mode of treatment, the harmonizer is guided by the considerations stated in paragraph 390, and by his own idea of what is fitting.

ENHARMONIC MODULATION.

392. This subject has already been glanced at in paragraph 222, and, for the assistance of the student in his future studies, the following is added. The term *enharmonic* is applied to those intervals smaller than a chromatic second (chromatic "semitone") of which theory takes cognisance, although instruments such as the organ and pianoforte are incapable of expressing them, as, for example, D sharp and E flat. *Enharmonic diesis* has a similar meaning, *diesis* being a Greek word signifying *division* or *difference*. When a note in a given part is thus altered (as D sharp becoming E flat, or *vice versa*) the alteration is termed an *enharmonic change*; and, if the chord which contains the altered note is resolved in accordance with its new key-relationship (shown by its new notation), *enharmonic modulation* is effected, by means of which the composer can accomplish a rapid and unexpected change to a very remote key.

393. The chords usually employed for the purpose of enharmonic modulation are the diminished seventh, changing into some other inversion of the same chord; the augmented sixth, altering into the dominant seventh; and the dominant seventh becoming the augmented sixth; in all of which cases the change of notation, if carried out practically, involves of course a change of key.

394. In paragraph 379, it was stated that the diminished seventh can be written in four different ways, the notes on a pianoforte remaining the same, as shown in figs. 304 to 307: if, therefore, a composer, after using the chord in either of those forms, changes its notation and resolves it accordingly, he is able to modulate by a single stroke to either of the keys shown in figs. 308 to 311. For example, if the music is in the key of C major or minor, by introducing the first chord in fig. 308, he can by means of the enharmonic change shown in fig. 317 modulate to the key of three sharps or to any of its related keys. Further, as the diminished seventh can, *without* the aid of any enharmonic change, be resolved into several different keys, the result when combined *with* this change is that the composer can modulate instantaneously from any one key to any other.

Fig. 317.



Fig. 318.



The diminished seventh is sometimes succeeded by the dominant seventh before resolving, as in fig. 319.

Fig. 319.



FIRST STEPS IN MUSICAL COMPOSITION.

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395. As, in like manner, the dominant seventh has, on a pianoforte, the same notes as the augmented sixth, the employment of the enharmonic change shown in fig. 320 (the augmented sixth becoming the dominant seventh) can effect modulation from the key of C to that of A \flat and its related keys. Fig. 321 is an example of the dominant seventh becoming the augmented sixth, by means of which similar changes of key can be accomplished.

Fig. 320.

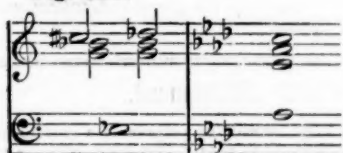
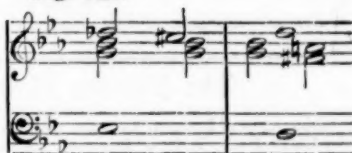


Fig. 321.



396. The student will naturally enquire why, as the ear of an *auditor* (who has no cognisance of the change of notation) can bear these abrupt modulations, the *performer* cannot dispense with the enharmonic change in like manner—what *use* is it? To such a query there is probably only one answer—the ear can be trained to *anything*: if a given modulation can be rendered agreeable to the ear, or the ear reconciled to the abruptness of the modulation, *with* a change of notation, the same result is obtainable *without*. The enharmonic change is made in the interest of the theorist; but the practical composer can dispense with it, and sometimes does so, in which case the theorist accounts for the progression by *supposing* the change of notation: it is, therefore, quite possible that the enharmonic change may in the future become as obsolete as the old legal fiction concerning John Doe and Richard Roe. On the other hand, certain eminent theorists hold that an enharmonic change, if it means anything at all, must signify a slight change of pitch as well as a change of notation. Of this opinion was the late General Thompson, who in his “Just Intonation” remarks—“It is presumable that, with the voice or viol family, the change would take place by a gliding or gradual alteration, which, if sensible at all, would have the effect of a grace.” It was for the purpose of carrying this theory into practice that General Thompson contrived his “enharmonic organ”—an instrument capable of making the distinction between D sharp and E flat, and similar pairs of sounds; and, as the result of his experiments with the enharmonic change as practically effected upon his organ, he reports—“Changes of key involving this alteration have a peculiar effect consisting of an expression of suspense or expectation, when the change of sound is into a leading note, suggestive of impressive harmony to follow.” The subject of enharmonic modulation will doubtless have further light thrown upon it in time to come: meanwhile, the student will remember that the term “enharmonic change” does not *necessarily* denote a change of notation merely, but may in the future signify something more.

William Jackson of Exeter.

THERE was a musical party in the town, taught by the celebrated W. Jackson of tuneful memory. He used to indulge in private meetings, that is, with four or five of his best scholars, when they sang canzonets, elegies, etc., chiefly Jackson's compositions, who always accompanied on the instrument, and with his fine deep bass voice. Handel's music was also played and sung, and a harpsichord, with a double row of keys for that composer's works, was preferred, although pianofortes had come to light and sound, but not with those strong powers they now possess. I was the only

one not a performer allowed to be present, because I could hold my tongue and snuff the candles; and never was a person more delighted at hearing what it might be supposed I could not understand; but harmony reaches all hearts that have feeling, and to this day I recollect “Time has not thinned my flowing hair,” and “In a vale closed with woodlands.”

Jackson was a man of sense and talent, did not paint badly, made good sketches, had read much, and conversed very agreeably. One inconvenience attended him not uncommon to his profession, and his

he had a very nice ear, and not being of a sordid disposition, and his compositions having had a very extensive sale at home and abroad, especially in Italy (so that he was in easy circumstances), he resolved to try the experiment of teaching only those who were likely to play well, and thus save his own ears and his employer's purses. I knew a lady to whom he said, "I cannot any longer pick your pocket, your daughter will never play." He attended a family in the neighbourhood one whole day

in the week, for which he received £100 a year, equal to £200 at present; there were several daughters who did credit to the instruction they received; but the father of the family wished to be a musician, and asked Jackson whether, if he took lessons on the violincello, he should be able to play? "No, never, give me leave to tell your Lordship." Need I say the honest man was dismissed, and another master supplied his place.—*Gentlewoman of the Old School.*

The Pioneers of the Singing Movement.

[Before taking leave of Mainzer, we insert an essay of his which served the purpose of a preface to a work entitled "The Gaelic Psalm Tunes of Rosshire," published at Edinburgh in 1844. This work, which is a curiosity in its way, originated thus: a Mr. Robert Brown, of Glasgow, had been at the pains to note down the melodies of certain psalm tunes as sung in the North Highlands of Scotland, but the extremely florid nature of the Highland versions occasioned a controversy, the point at issue being this—Which of the renderings is the original, and which the copy; had the plain, syllabic tune gradually blossomed out into the exuberant foliage of the Gaelic version, or were the graces and flourishes indigenous, and the plain tune a mean and paltry dilution thereof? The battle of the versions was waxing furious, when Mainzer was appealed to in order to settle the dispute if possible. Mainzer entered into the matter *con amore*, and delivered his opinion by writing an "Introduction" to the work itself.]

MAINZER ON GAELIC PSALM TUNES.

"They chant their notes in simple guise;
They tune their hearts—by far the noblest aim:
Perhaps Dundee's wild warbling measures rise,
Or plaintive Martyr's, worthy of the name,
Or noble Elgin beats the heaven-ward flame
The sweetest far of Scotia's holy lays."

BURNS.

THE peculiarities of the popular melodies of Scotland have, at various times, attracted a great share of attention. They are of a strange and remarkable construction, having their basis in elements altogether different from those upon which the popular melodies of other countries are formed. Their curiously limited scale, and consequently strange, melodious, and harmonious modulations and cadences, give to them distinctive features, a stamp of originality in form and expression, a native character, which, somewhat foreign to the ear and our feelings, is not devoid of particular charms, secret and mysterious influences, over our memory—our heart.

Wherever we open the pages of the popular music of Scotland, we meet with strains of an original cast, unexpected modes of thought, with all the charm, boldness, and irregularity of pure musical expression, and natural popular genius.

With such inherent qualities, and individual characteristics, the melodies springing from, and sung by the people, could not fail to engage the most serious attention and studious enquiries, both of those who love music for its own sake, in all its various natural and artificial productions, and those who, imbued with higher views, seek to penetrate beyond

the surface of external forms, (in manners habits and customs, in language, poetry and music), in order to obtain more philosophical conclusions to the origin, infancy, and character of a nation, their degrees of civilization, the development and strength of their moral feelings, sentiments, and affections.

The soul unfolds itself in songs; they are in fact the enchanted mirror of the secret movements within. Man delights to clothe in song his hopes and fears, his joys and sorrows; it is, therefore, in the lays of a nation that we discover their natural dispositions, predilections, and favourite pursuits.

Although remarks of this description bear more directly upon nations nearer to nature than to civilization, they are nevertheless completely applicable to those people who have retained a great portion of their original character, through all the advances which they may have made in civilized life. The Swiss, by his geographical position, is isolated from the refinements of the surrounding nations. None of the mighty countries lying at the foot of his lofty mountains, have succeeded in changing his manners, customs, or dialect. He is attached, with the same unshaken fidelity, to his lakes and glaciers, to his prejudices and superstitions; his heart clings with equal warmth to his hut surrounded by regions of eternal snow, to the solitude of his glens, to the cut of his dress, the size of his hat, and the colour of its ribbons. Placed upon the watch-tower of Europe, he listens with unspeakable delight to the bells of the kine, to the hoarse sounding through the vale. In vain for him have been invented German harmonies, Italian

trills, and French *contredanses*. In vain for him the fashions of France charm the rest of Europe, remodelling the human form, and modifying its appearance in endless repetitions: he stands alone in his innocence and simplicity, a fossil-like representation of the line of his ancestors. But not only by mountains is man separated from man; the islander lives in equal solitude in his sea-encircled home, the wild steppes of the Ukraine, the moors and marshes of Lithuania in a like degree tend to isolate him from his fellows, to confine in a state of tedious infancy, both man and thought.

Like Switzerland, the Highlands of Scotland have long preserved genuine traces of their original manners, and distinctive points of character, while the Lowlands, which, less than three centuries ago, were the home of the border robber, and the bold moss-trooper, and of which King James V. observed, that "no bush could keep a cow," may be regarded as a continuation of the plains of England, where commerce, industry, and the cultivation of the soil and intellect, have effaced the vestiges of the rude habits of a superstitious and barbarous people.

Besides such historical outlines, many peculiarities of the people, their manners and habits, have been preserved in songs; in songs of a strange, striking, and original cast. Much, therefore, has been written on Scotch popular music, more perhaps than on the music of any other country; and especially by continental writers, such as Herder, Baron Thalberg, Dr. Lichtenhal, Professor Thibaut, Dr. Marx, Krecitzmer, and many others. The Scottish melodies have been analysed, their scales have been investigated and compared with those of distant ages and distant countries; theories have been formed and overturned in the attempt to arrive at a satisfactory conclusion respecting the defective nature of the scale, to which Scotland has so tenaciously adhered in her best and most popular tunes.

In all the collections of the songs of different nations, published on the continent, are introduced those of Scotland. Some, indeed, contain the finest melodies for which I have hitherto vainly sought in the various collections published in this country. In Germany they have been arranged in different parts, and published with accompaniments. Herder himself has greatly contributed to awaken a taste and interest for Scottish songs, by his beautiful translations of a number of them. Dr. Marx in his work *Die Kunst der Gesanges*, gives various Scottish melodies, analyses them, and thus recommends a collection of them published in Berlin:—

"They are invaluable songs, and no musician, and especially no singer, should be unacquainted with them."

In Scotland, one collection succeeds another without the slightest attempt towards improvement. They are generally prepared in an injudicious manner, with limited views, very little taste, and often with less knowledge. In some the good is completely lost in the mass of rubbish by which they are surrounded; others are distinguished by meretricious ornaments, and others again by accompaniments altogether foreign to their character, and in which they appear as beautiful as a monkey in the yellow dress of a postillion, or in a wig *a la Voltaire*.

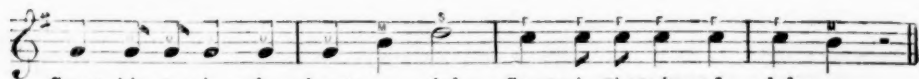
Numerous as are the *Minstrels* and *Museums*, the *Garlands* and *Relics*, the *Gems* and *Beauties*, names which have decorated these various collections, they are far from possessing all the best and most original of Scottish songs, they contain not all the gems, not all the relics worth collecting, not all the beauties called into existence by the popular genius of Scotland.

Among these are the examples of Scottish Psalmody, which we herewith present for the first time, to the public, and which have no room, either singly or collectively, in any of these innumerable publications.

Those who are acquainted with Scottish or Gaelic songs, may notwithstanding be totally ignorant of Gaelic Psalmody; and those conversant with the Psalmody practised in Protestant countries in general, could scarcely imagine so total an inversion and transformation of the tunes which they have been accustomed to hear sung in a garment so simple and unornamented. It must appear very remarkable that, with all the researches made in Highland minstrelsy, these extraordinary specimens of popular musical composition should have been overlooked; as if the fact of their being based upon the tunes commonly sung in Scotland, had deprived them of their value, and diminished that interest which we so gladly bestow on popular productions, both in poetry and music.

[To be continued.]

SPHOR'S AUTOBIOGRAPHY.—We understand that the whole of the remaining copies of the English translation of this work have been bought up by Mr. W. Reeves, publisher of the *Musical Standard*, and that new copies of the work are now only to be obtained through him. This charming book, of which Mr. Hullah speaks so highly in his "History of Modern Music," has had a large sale since its publication in 1865, and as only a limited number of copies can now be had, musicians will doubtless embrace this opportunity of adding to their libraries the autobiography of so distinguished a violinist and composer as Louis Spohr. *Musical Standard*.



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